



**Public Hearing Written Testimony of
Acting Commissioner Linda Agnew
Select Committee on Children
March 4, 2010**

Good afternoon Senator Musto, Representative Urban and members of the Select Committee on Children. Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with written testimony regarding a bill on your public hearing agenda today. My name is Linda Agnew and I am the Acting Commissioner of the Department of Labor.

I have significant concerns regarding H.B. # 5360 for the following reasons:

- The bill creates a Children in Recession Leadership Team, which duplicates existing efforts of multiple agencies and Commissions, including agencies' involvement in the Child Poverty and Prevention Council, codified at Conn. Gen. Stat. §4-67x.
- Section 1, subsection (c)(7), of the bill requires agencies to "maximize the availability of targeted case management and intervention services" but does not specify to which services this mandate pertains. Moreover, most services, e.g., Jobs First Employment Services (JFES), which are administered by CTDOL, are already serving at maximum capacity.
- Section 2 of the bill mandates the development of a comprehensive state service approach, which is essentially already in operation. Several agencies, such as DSS and CTDOL, already work in an integrated fashion to best serve JFES participants, through regulations, agency policies and shared automated databases, while still ensuring compliance with state and federal confidentiality guidelines and administrative procedures.
- Section 7, subsection (a)(2), of the bill strives to utilize the subsidized employment category in a manner which potentially contravenes Federal law and subsidized employment guidelines, which are in place to ensure the protection of the rights of existing employees, e.g. layoff rights and member rights under collective bargaining agreements.
- Section 7, subsections (a)(1) and (b), duplicate existing efforts already employed by DSS and CTDOL as part of a Governor's workgroup pertaining to maximizing subsidized employment and youth employment opportunities.
- Section 8 of the bill conflicts with federal TANF regulations and would affect CTDOL's performance measurements for purposes of federal participation rates, potentially jeopardizing the receipt of federal grants.

Thank you again for this opportunity. Please feel free to contact my staff or me if you need additional information.